

Take A Closer Look At *Worksite Trips And Tours*

What Is A Worksite Trip Or Tour?

Worksite visits are field trips where a group of students, escorted by school staff, spend one to three hours viewing work areas. The visits can be fast-paced, moving through many departments or work areas, or they can be subject intensive, such as a tour of an accounting department or a warehouse. Unlike job shadows, where students have one-on-one experiences, trips and tours involve groups of young people experiencing the visit together. Some employers design activities for students during or after tours. Field trips are appropriate for any grade level; however, the information presented should be tailored to the age of the students.

What Is The Purpose Of A Worksite Trip Or Tour?

Worksite visits help students:

- Gain exposure to the world of work by touring workplaces in the community
- Get an overview of how a business operates by touring the different departments and areas of a workplace
- Expand their understanding of the variety of jobs in a career area and industry
- Talk to different adults about the academic and technical skills required for a variety of jobs
- Increase their vision of career opportunities
- Understand the connection between school, work, and achieving their goals

What Is The Employer's Role?

Employers expose students to careers, technologies, organizational structures, departments, skill demands and working environments during tours or site visits. They answer students' questions and engage them in conversation by asking them about the things they see and the people they meet during field trips.

How To Design A Successful Worksite Trip Or Tour

Careful planning before students arrive at the workplace is the key to an effective field trip that does not disrupt the normal flow of work, and engages student interests. Visits can be organized a number of ways. For example, employers can follow the development of a product from conception to completion, moving from one work area to the next. Visits can also be organized by themes such as how computers are used on the job. Prompt student participation by asking probing questions like "What math skills do you think a worker must know to do this job?"

Worksite Trips And Tours Checklist

- Be available for a conversation with a school representative
- Choose a focus or theme for the visit
- Make the visit compatible with the students' age (younger students do best with variety and short time periods; more mature students enjoy going into greater depth)
- For 10 or more students, consider splitting the group and recruiting more tour guides
- Review relevant company health and safety rules, and provide any necessary safety gear

During Worksite Trips And Tours

- Schedule activities for specific times so employees along the tour can plan their work; allow time for students to ask questions
- Mix talking with showing; if possible, design hands-on activities
- Encourage other employees to talk about their work, especially employees in nontraditional roles
- Have funenthusiasm is contagious
- Make sure everyone along the tour route knows that students will be in the area
- Give students brochures, souvenir pens or other take aways, if possible

A Field Trip Success Story

Bank of America has 100 branches in Oregon and Southwest Washington. It is the third largest bank in Oregon in terms of deposits, and third largest in the nation in terms of assets.

Bank of America has made education and youth services one of its community investment and economic development priorities. The bank supports education through many partnerships and activities, including job shadows and worksite tours for teachers and students from David Douglas, Lincoln, Marshall and Roosevelt High Schools—Portland metropolitan-area schools for which it has established business/school relationships.

The tours have focused attention on local bank branches, a regional loan servicing center, and other administrative departments responsible for marketing, data processing, proof and mailroom operations, and public affairs. Other popular aspects of the tours have included sessions with personal investment sales representatives, visits with senior bank executives, and a panel discussion led by young, entry-level bankers who started their careers from different educational backgrounds: high school summer interns, part-time college students, and university and community college graduates.

Paula Ordway, Vice President for Wholesale Banking, states, "The students of today are the employees and consumers of tomorrow. It's in Bank of America's best interest—and in the best interest of our state—to make sure our students have a good foundation in the work environment. We want them to be prepared to enter the workforce with good skills and a clear understanding of what will be required of them."

Peter Gray, Vice President of Corporate Affairs, stresses the importance of school-to-work activities and the need for more businesses to participate. "We must all become actively involved in helping to develop and implement the world-class education system our young people need and deserve. If we succeed in this important task, they will be better prepared for the opportunities and challenges the future will bring, and then we can all be winners!"

Story date: 5/97

Material in this fact sheet has been excerpted, in whole and in part, from *Connections: Linking Work And Learning, The Employer Recruitment & Orientation Guide*, published by the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory and Jobs For the Future through a grant from the U.S. Department of Education. The activity definition is compatible with the 10/96 draft of *Oregon School-To-Work Definitions And Statewide Performance Measures*.